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**Children & Family Services  
Committee**

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**HB 1833**

**Brief Description:** Providing incentives for improved job training and placement services.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kagi, Hinkle, Conway, Walsh, Kenney, Chase, Pettigrew, Appleton, Upthegrove, Morrell, Simpson, Haler and Santos.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires integration of job training and placement services provided through the WorkFirst program and the federal Workforce Investment Act.
- Establishes an incentive program for integration of job training and placement services for recipients of the WorkFirst program and other individuals who are seeking jobs.

**Hearing Date:** February 14, 2005.

**Staff:** Cynthia Forland (786-7152).

**Background:**

*WorkFirst:*

In 1996, the federal government enacted welfare reform, shifting the emphasis of the federal program to a "work first" approach. In 1997, Washington enacted its version of welfare reform, establishing the WorkFirst program. The WorkFirst program emphasizes the importance of gaining employment and staying employed.

Regional plans under the WorkFirst program must be developed on a biennial basis. Those plans must be prepared in consultation with local and regional sources, adapting the statewide WorkFirst program to achieve maximum effect for the participants and the communities within which they reside. Local consultation must include, to the greatest extent possible, input from local and regional planning bodies for social services and workforce development. The regional and local administrator must consult with employers of various sizes, labor representatives, training and education providers, program participants, economic development organizations, community organizations, tribes, and local governments in the preparation of the service area plan.

*Workforce Development:*

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Board) oversees the state's workforce development system, and was designated by Executive Order as the Workforce Investment Board for the purposes of the federal Workforce Investment Act.

The Board is required to develop and maintain a state unified plan in accordance with the federal Workforce Investment Act. The purpose of the unified plan is to promote universal access to employment and training programs, and to simplify those programs so that state employment and training customers can better obtain these services. The Board is required to utilize the unified planning process to better integrate federal and state employment and training programs.

The Board is required to work in partnership with Local Workforce Investment Boards (Local Boards) to develop the state unified plan. Local Boards are to provide input to the Board in developing the state unified plan, which will thereby articulate their local strategies and needs.

In addition to providing input to the Board in the development of the state unified plan, the Local Boards are required by Executive Order to develop and maintain a local unified plan in accordance with the federal Workforce Investment Act. The unified plan must include a strategic plan that assesses local employment opportunities and skill needs, the present and future workforce, the current workforce development system, information on financial resources, goals, objectives, and strategies for the local workforce development system, and a system-wide financial strategy for implementing the plan. The Board is required to review the plans of Local Boards for consistency with the state unified plan and provide technical assistance to Local Boards, as necessary.

Local Boards are also required to conduct oversight of the local one-stop system, known as WorkSource, which provides resources to job seekers, including the following:

- free use of computers, copiers, phones, faxes and other career resources;
- internet access to jobs;
- job referral and placement;
- classes on how to get and keep a job;
- information on the fastest growing jobs and wages;
- referral to training and other community services;
- access to Unemployment Insurance; and
- translation services.

### **Summary of Bill:**

#### *WorkFirst:*

Regional plans required under the WorkFirst program must specify how the job training and placement services provided through the WorkFirst program and the federal Workforce Investment Act are to be integrated.

#### *Workforce Development:*

The Board must include in its planning requirements for Local Boards a requirement that those Local Boards specify how the job training and placement services under the federal Workforce Investment Act and the WorkFirst program are to be integrated.

#### *Incentive Funding:*

An incentive program is established in the Governor's Office for integrating the delivery of job training and placement services for recipients of the WorkFirst program and other individuals who are seeking jobs.

Local Boards may apply, in partnership with the WorkFirst program and other partners in the one-stop system, to receive funding under the incentive program. In applying for funding, the Local Boards must clearly demonstrate the approach to integration of job training and placement services that they will undertake.

Funding awards under the incentive program are to be made to Local Boards for 12-month periods. In making decisions concerning renewal of funding, which may include adjustments in the level of funding, consideration must be given to the following criteria:

- implementation of the identified integration approach; and
- performance with respect to the following outcomes for the population served: rate of employment; and level of earnings.

The Governor is required to provide funding for the incentive program from WorkFirst program funds and federal Workforce Investment Act funds.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.